

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/731,644

Applicant(s)

TROXELL ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Nitin Patel

2629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 9/11/2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-20.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date ____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other ____



Terminal Disclaimer

1. The terminal disclaimer filed on 9/11/2006 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of 10/28/2013 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

REASON FOR ALLOWANCE

2. Claims 1-20 is allowed.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reason for allowance:

The prior art fails to teach or suggest an integrated switch-indicator unit, comprising: a light emitting diode structure for providing a plurality of indicators; and an overlay input device integrated with the light emitting diode structure, the overlay input device comprising: a non-conductive substrate; and a plurality of conductive electrode pairs formed on the substrate, wherein each of the electrode pairs forms a proximity sensitive region and includes a first electrode that receives an input signal and a second electrode that provides an output signal, and wherein the first and second electrodes of each of the electrode pairs are capacitively coupled and the capacitance of each of the electrode pairs changes when a conductive member is located near a given one of the electrode pairs as claimed in claim 1.

The prior art fails to teach or suggest an integrated switch-indicator unit, comprising: a light emitting diode structure for providing a plurality of indicators; and an overlay input device integrated with the light emitting diode structure, the overlay input device comprising: a non-conductive substrate; a plurality of conductive electrode pairs

formed on the substrate, wherein each of the electrode pairs forms a proximity sensitive region and includes a first electrode that receives an input signal and a second electrode that provides an output signal, and wherein the first and second electrodes of each of the electrode pairs are capacitively coupled and the capacitance of each of the electrode pairs changes when a conductive member is located near a given one of the electrode pairs; and a first non-conductive cover formed on the substrate over the electrode pairs as claimed in claim 9.

The prior art fails to teach or suggest an integrated automotive switch-indicator unit, comprising: a light emitting diode structure for providing a plurality of indicators, wherein the light emitting diode structure is one of an organic light emitting diode (OLED) structure and a polymer light emitting diode (PLED) structure; an overlay input device integrated with the light emitting diode structure, the overlay input device comprising: a non-conductive substrate; a plurality of conductive electrode pairs formed on the substrate, wherein each of the electrode pairs forms a proximity sensitive region and includes a first electrode that receives an input signal and a second electrode that provides an output signal, and wherein the first and second electrodes of each of the electrode pairs are capacitively coupled and the capacitance of each of the electrode pairs changes when a conductive member is located near a given one of the electrode pairs; and a first non-conductive cover formed on the substrate over the electrode pairs; and an integrated controller/bus access integrated circuit (IC) coupling the light emitting diode structure and the overlay input device to an automotive bus, the IC controlling the illumination of the light emitting diode structure to identify a location and function of a

switch and sensing when the capacitance of one of the electrode pairs changes to indicate a switch input as claimed in claim 16.

4. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nitin Patel whose telephone number is 571-272-7677. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bipin H. Shalwala can be reached on 571-272-7681. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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Nitin Patel
Examiner
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nitin Patel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.